

# Abide In My Love

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 13 December 2020

Preacher: Colin Dow

[0:00] Abide in my love. Abide in my love. Thinking and speaking about the love of Jesus is, for us, one of the most enjoyable and satisfying activities in which we can engage as Christians.

We live in a world marked by violence and war and disagreement. Even when the world in which we live talks about love, it's a kind of love we don't really recognize.

Chaotic love with no boundaries and no lasting commitment. By contrast, there are few more satisfying and enjoyable activities for the Christian than thinking about and speaking through the love of Jesus for us.

The Apostle Paul certainly felt that way. When in Galatians 2 verse 20, he wrote, The Son of God loved me and he gave himself for me.

He had been a beast of a man, but Jesus loved him through it. And now Paul loved nothing more than thinking about and speaking through the love of Jesus for him.

[1:21] The passions of the young burn hot. The passions of the old burn long. And Jesus commands both, saying, Abide in my love.

The love of Jesus is to be our dwelling house. The love of Jesus is to be our home as Christians. And our Lord commands us, Stay there. Continue there.

Remain there. Abide there. Not just in the days of your youth, But all the way to the end. The Jesus who loves us commands us, saying, Abide in my love.

Well, this evening as we approach Christmas, I want to fix our minds on that which we love to think about and speak through. The love of Jesus for us.

And then to ask how from John 15, 9, We are to respond. So first we'll look at loved by Jesus, And then abiding in Jesus.

[2:27] First of all, loved by Jesus. The command of Jesus here in John 15, 9, Is to be seared on the memory of our hearts.

Abide in my love. So many reasons why it's important, But not the least important, Is that it tells us that Jesus loves us.

It speaks of my love. He begins the verse by saying, As the Father has loved me, So have I loved you.

The love Jesus has for us Is his Father's love for him. The infinite, eternal, and unchangeable fellowship Between God the Father and God the Son.

As Jesus' disciples, That's our dwelling place. That's where we abide. One of the commentators on this passage Calls the love of Christ The atmosphere in which the disciple lives.

[3:35] The atmosphere in which the disciple lives. Fish live in the sea. We live on the land. And all Christians, For every Christian, The love of Christ Is the atmosphere he or she breathes.

In these dark and cold winter months, There is something you need to know. You need to know it. You need to believe it.

You need even to feel it. Jesus Christ loves you With all the passion And with all the intensity And all the inventiveness With which he is loved By his heavenly Father.

He knows everything about you. He knows your weaknesses And your doubts And your fears. He knows your hidden sins. And he knows your private questions.

But never could you be the object Of a purer love Than you are of the love of Jesus. You may doubt yourself By all means.

[4:48] You may doubt your ability To love others by all means. But please never doubt this. Jesus Christ loves you. Consider with me Where, when,

and to whom Jesus first gave this command.

He's in an upper room On the night before his crucifixion And he's sharing supper With his disciples. Having been with him For three years On this night He took off his outer clothing And he wrapped a towel Around his waist And he filled a basin with water And he washed their dirty feet. The evening began In John 13 verse 1 Where we read Now before the feast Of the Passover When Jesus knew That his hour had come To depart out of this world To the Father Having loved his own Who were in the world He loved them to the end He loved them to the end He faces imminent death Not just any death The tortuous, agonizing death Of the cross And yet that evening In that upper room With those disciples It's characterized by one thing And one thing only The love of Jesus A love that keeps on Expressing itself In acts of self-abasing service And never tiring devotion And then he's taking bread And he's breaking it And he's saying to his disciples Take, eat This is my body And he's taking wine And he's pouring it out

And he says to his disciples This is the blood Of the new covenant In my blood Drink this All of you He pours water Into a basin He pours wine Into the cup He washed his disciples Feet with the water He poured out His blood on the cross To wash the hearts Of his disciples clean From that point on Whenever the disciples Of Jesus Share in the holy sacrament Of communion They are to remember Christ's self-giving Love for them They are to breathe deeply The atmosphere Of Jesus' love They are to take that bread Into their mouths And say This is the body Christ gave Because he loved me And they're taking The wine into their mouths And they're saying This is the blood Christ shed for me Because he loves me Christ's disciples Sit at the Lord's table And they breathe The atmosphere

Of his love No one has ever loved you Like Jesus loves you No one ever can No one ever will The heart of every human being However noble Is tarnished by self-interest And selfishness But the heart of Jesus Is filled only with otherness And the interests of others Consider who it is Jesus is loving Well there's Peter And there's James And there's John And the other disciples In just a few hours time When Jesus is praying On the Mount of Olives They're going to be sleeping And when Jesus needs them most When he is being falsely accused Beaten and tortured They will deny him And they will abandon him He will stand alone Against the fury and hatred Malice and malevolence Of his enemies None of them will stand with him

[8:29] They will all hide For them he will die Upon the cross For him They will hide From all harm Jesus knows it He knows it full well And even at this point in time He senses the impending doom Of tomorrow's trials He knows that having been with him For three years Having pledged their loyalty Repeatedly to him His disciples will all forsake him They will all abandon him They will all deny him He knows it full well And yet he loves them With all the passion And the intensity He always had He loved them to the end Jesus loves the weakling And he loves the failure He loves the doubter And he loves the coward

While they're running for the hills He is running for the cross The love of Jesus Is the topic of countless hymns Perhaps the most famous Being the simplest of all Jesus loves me This I know For the Bible tells me so The world around us A nature Red in tooth and claw Won't tell us That Jesus loves us But the Bible will And the Bible does The Bible is filled With the love of a Jesus Who created us And redeemed us The Jesus Who's always loved us And always will And then we have that That marvelous English hymn All the deep, deep love of Jesus Pure, unmeasured, boundless, free Rolling like a mighty ocean In its fullness over me The hymn writer

A London man By the name of Samuel Francis Had as a teenager Stood on a bridge Over the Thames in London And contemplated Throwing himself into the river It was a fresh realization Of how much Jesus loved him That kept him from suicide By contrast The English hymn writer Isaac Watts Had no skeletons in his cupboard Brought up as a Christian He became a minister At a young age He lived a full life Of gospel faithfulness And yet he The same as every other Christian Who has ever lived Breathed in the atmosphere Of Christ's love And wondered how Christ Could love him As a result When he wrote that Famous hymn When I surveyed The wondrous cross He wrote these words He said of Christ's love It's so amazing It's so divine Demands my soul My life My all When Watts looked

Upon the cross of Christ He saw The amazing Divine love Of Jesus Jesus loved The man with leprosy And his heart Was moved With compassion To reach out And touch him Jesus loved Jesus

loved The daughter of Jairus As he said to her Little girl I say to you Arise Jesus loved That beast-like man They called Legion And he commanded The demons To leave him He loved The rich young ruler Even though that Young man Turned his back On Jesus And he loves us In our sin And shame And guilt Of Saul The murdering Pharisee It is written Jesus loved me And gave himself For me And finally He loved him To the point Where he breathes His last on the cross Bearing the crushing Weight of their sin Upon his own Holy shoulders Suffering the pains Of hell On their account And the judgment Of God Which was theirs By right But his by love We could go on We could fill The rest of the night And the rest of the year With explanations Expositions And demonstrations Of the love of Jesus That love Which is particular And peculiar to him What he calls My love At the wedding Of Prince Harry To Meghan Markle The presiding minister Bishop From somewhere He spoke in the passage Many waters Cannot quench love And what he said Was very nice Really Very nice indeed But it was not about The love of Jesus The distinctively Self-sacrificial God-like My love In which Jesus Commands us To abide Jesus says Abide in love

[13:37] No he says Abide in my love What the bishop said Was a beautiful love But fake gems When placed beside The greater love Of Jesus And please believe me When I say to you Once more Despite how you may Feel about yourself And despite how you Think others Feel about you Read the text Jesus Loves You Loved by Jesus And then secondly Abiding in Jesus Abiding in Jesus It may be something To do with us Being Scots But the word Abide It evokes Powerful images For us In many parts Of Scotland You can be You can expect To be asked the question

Where do you abide For that reason And not for any Particular grammatical Concern I far prefer The translation Abide To the rather Less evocative Continue Or remain Because abiding Provides Such a larger Picture of what it Means to be a Disciple of Christ To abide In the love Of Christ Is to live There It's to stay There Yes It's even To belong There To define Yourself By the love Of Christ Our homes Are called Our places Of abode But even Even that Sounds so Coldly clinical Doesn't it Abiding Is warm Abiding Is inviting Abiding Is homely It's that Place of Safety It's security It's It's belonging And Jesus Says to us Abide In My love

You ask a Christian Where do you Abide She can Fairly answer Abide In the love Of Jesus That's my Home That's my Place of Safety My place Of security My place Of belonging When the Storm outside Is blowing And when the Rain is Lashing on The roof The love Of Jesus Is warm And inviting And it's Homely It's that Love which Is so Deep So pure So unmeasured So boundless So free So amazing So divine It demands Our hearts Our souls Our all It's that Love It's that love Which fills The whole Universe And more Beyond That love With which God the Father Loves His son Overflowing Like a Mighty Waterfall And drenching Us Under its Golden Flood It's a love Love that That held That held Jesus To the Cross For us It's Significant Don't you Think That Jesus Points to His love As that In which We are To abide Earlier Earlier in The chapter In verse Three Jesus Has commanded His disciples Saying Abide In me But we Want to ask The question Yes Jesus We will Make our Home in You But in What Aspect And Jesus Replies It's my Love I don't Want to Divide that Which should Not be Divided Namely The attributes Of God Nevertheless Jesus Calls us To make Our home In His Love Not in His justice But in His love Not in His wrath But in His love Not in His secret Will But in His love Too many Christians Are spiritually Paralyzed

Because rather Than living In His Love Revealed To them They choose To live In the Mysterious Secrets Of His Hidden Will But as All the Time Jesus Says No No No No No Abide In My Love He does Not say Abide In My Commands As if The end Point Of the Christian Life Is Obedience Rather Obedience Is the Path To Abiding As we'll See in A moment There are So many Christians For whom Legalism A love For the Laws Of God Is Interpreted Through The lens Of men Has Usurped The place The love Of Jesus Should have In their Hearts The Endless Topic Of the Meditations Is not The cross On which Jesus Died Not the Resurrection Love of Jesus Not the Love God The Father Has for His Son Rather They want To talk Endlessly Of Sabbaths And Behaviors

[18:39] And Appearances We have Reversed The Priorities Of Christ Himself Who Called Upon Us Saying Abide In My Love The Love Of Christ That Love Of Which We Spoke So Long In Our First Part Of The Sermon That's Your Home That's Your Security It's What Jesus Has Done For Us Which Is Your

Security Not What We Have Done For Him The Cross Of Jesus His Act Of Obedience That Is In Which We Are To Remain But Then I Want You To Notice Also The Verbal Form Of This Command Abide In My Love Abide In My Love The Love Of Christ Is Our Home It Is Not A Halls Of Residence In

Which We Stay Term Time And Then Go Home Afterward It Is Not A Bed And Breakfast It Is Not A Hotel It Is Home It's Where We Are To Stay It's Where We Are To Abide We Are To Continue To Remain To Remain In The Love To Remain In Christ If The Branch Should Not Remain In The Vine It Will Quickly Die And So We Are To Remain And Continue In The Love Of Christ Our Lord Is Not Advising Us Nor Is He Commending His Love To Us He Is Commanding Us To Remain In His Love Just In Case We Have Mistakenly Understood The Love Of Christ To Be Permissive And Open To Our Abuse Our Lord Commands Us Saying Remain In My Love Too

Often Too Many Of Us Hotel In Which We Stay From Time To Time Sunday To Sunday Perhaps But We Don't Live There Through The Week Our Minds Are Not Being Transformed By His Love Our Hearts Aren't Being Moved By His Will Love Our Wills Are Not Being Motivated By His Love Our Minds Are Still Conformed To The Standards Of This World Our Hearts Still Moved By This World Appeals Our Will Still The Verb Jesus Uses Is In Its Second Person Plural Active Impeditive Form In Other Words Jesus Is Saying It Is Your Responsibility To Abide In Me Your Responsibility Abiding In Christ Requires Blood Sweat And Tears Self Denial

And Active Choosing Of The Love Of Christ Over Against All Other Attachments We Cannot And Dare Not Blame Others For Our Falling Away From The Love Of Christ It Was The Church's Fault That I Fell From Christ It Was The Minister's Fault I Didn't Remain In His Love Or God Forbid It Was God's Fault I Didn't Remain In His Love On Account Of All The Difficult Providences He Sent The Buck Stops Here With You And With Me It Is For You To Remain In The Love Of Christ Young Man Remain In The Love Of Christ Young Woman Remain In The Love Of Christ Old Man Remain In The Love Of Christ Old Woman Remain In The Love Of Christ Abide

In His Love Come What May Continue In His Love However Hard It Gets Remain In His Love However And Whatever May Happen Tenaciously Cling For His Love Is Your Resting Place And There Is No Better His Love Is Your Home There Is No Such Thing As Passive Discipleship Rather As Charles Bridges Anglican Divine Wrote Daily Progress In Daily Progress Daily Progress Daily Progress Daily Clinging To Christ Daily Abiding In Christ We Need His Daily Grace For These Things But As We Close I Want To Briefly Ask The Question Well How Can I Remain And Abide In The Love Of Christ How Let Me Very Briefly Give Three Answers All From The Text Itself In The First Instance Abiding

[23:42] In The Love Of Christ Requires Us To Live In The Awareness Of Christ Love For Us And What That Love Meant In Practical Historical Terms It Means To Remember Over And Against What That Bishop Said At Harry And Meghan's Wedding That The Love Of Christ Is Not A Eerie Fairy Emotion A Pie In The Sky Bell Lettera The Love Of Christ Is Concrete In That It's Centered On The Cross On Which He Died Abiding In The Love Of Christ Means Daily Depending Upon The Sacrificial Love Of Jesus For Us Upon His Grace Upon The Gospel The Apostle Paul Wrote The Son Of God Loved Me And He Gave Himself For Me In Other Words If You Want To Abide In Christ Fix Your Mind And Your Heart Upon Golgotha's Hill Where The Son Of God So Dearly Beloved

Of His Father Emptied Himself For You Experienced All The Condemnation Of Your Sin And All Because He Loves You Let The Cross Be Your Daily Meditation And Your Daily Motivation In The Second Instance Abiding In Love Of Christ Is Not A Solitary Quest It's Not A Solitary Quest It Is To Be Attained Only In Community With Other Disciples With Others Who Themselves Are Abiding In His Love Love The Verbal Form Jesus Uses In Verse 9 Is A Second Person Imperative As if We Might Translate It By Saying Well Use Use Abide In My Love Although Though You You Need Me Lone Wolf Discipleship Ends In Disaster And Desertion Loose Canon Discipleship Backfires On Itself And Then Thirdly And Lastly As Jesus Goes On To Say In The Text If You Keep My Commandments You Will Abide In My Love Keep Them Obey Them Guard The Commandments Of Jesus These Commandments Which Are Summed Up In But One Word Love This Is My Commandment He Says In Verse 12 That You Love One Another As I Have Loved You Just As The Father Loves Us So Jesus So Just As The Father Loved Jesus Rather So Jesus Loves

Us And

Just As Jesus Loves Us So We Are To Love Others This Is My Commandment That You Love One Another As I Have Loved You Keep Obey And Guard The Commandment To Love Others To Go Back To The Beginning Of The Sermon One Of The Commentators Wrote The Love Of Christ Is The Atmosphere In Which The Disciple Breathe The Disciple Lives This is The Law Of Love Which Christ Commands Us To Strenuously Obey So To Live In That Atmosphere Of The Love Of Christ That We Love Others And That Just As The Love Of The Father For His Son Spills Over Into Our Lives So The Love Of The Son For Us Spills Over Into Our Love For Others There Is No Space In The Biding Place Of The Christian For Unforgiveness For

Grudges For Hate No Room In The Home Of The Christian For Spite Aloofness Greed Selfishness There's Something In These Dark COVID Months We All Need To Know And Not Just To Know But If I Can Use The Word To Feel You Need To Know And Feel The Love Of Christ For You You Need To Make Your Home In His Love To Live There To Bide There To Continue There And Despite The Questions The World Is Asking You And Which You May Be Asking Yourself Never Doubt That Though The World May Shaken Its Foundations Jesus Has Always And Will Always Love You He Proves It By His Death On The Cross I

[29:09] Know All That Remains Is For You To Remain In That Love That You Abide There In The Awareness Of Christ's Love For You Sharing In The Love Of Christ With Other Christians And Obeying Christ's Command To Love Others As A Student In Aberdeen University I Used To Love The Aberdeen Accent And Especially The Question That Sometimes They Would Ask You Where Do You Live Christian Let Me Ask You That Question Just One Last Time Where Do You Bide Where Do You